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# Food and Nutrition

APR 29 1976

## NEW FOOD STAMP REGULATIONS PROPOSED

ON FEBRUARY 26 the Food and Nutrition Service proposed a series of changes in food stamp program regulations. The proposed regulations were issued at the direction of President Ford, and are aimed at eliminating abuses, controlling costs, and concentrating benefits on those truly in need. The program reforms would reduce overall annual costs by \$1.2 billion.

The proposed regulations would:

- Set a standard deduction of \$100 per month for all households, rather than the current method of itemizing deductions. An additional \$25 a month would be allowed for any household which includes at least one member who is age 65 or older.

- Provide for a uniform purchase requirement. Each household would pay 30 percent of its adjusted gross monthly income for its coupon allotment. Currently, purchase requirements vary by calculations based on household size and income. All households, including those households categorically eligible, would receive a bonus of no less than \$5.

- Provide for a 90-day income accounting period. Eligibility and benefits would then be based upon average monthly income actually received during the 90 days prior to application for the program. This would replace the current method of estimating income for future months.

- Set a uniform national income standard of eligibility for participation of non-public assistance households at the poverty guidelines prescribed by the Office of Management and Budget. The following chart shows maximum allowable monthly income standards for the 48 States and District of Columbia, in accordance with these guidelines:

<u>Household Size</u>	<u>Income Standards</u>
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One.....	\$233
Two.....	308
Three.....	383
Four.....	458
Five.....	533
Six.....	608
Seven.....	683
Eight.....	758
For each additional family member, add \$75.	

- Tighten coupon and cash (purchase requirement) accountability of State agencies and issuing agents. This provision is designed to stop abuses of the program by revising procedures to insure prompt shipment and delivery of coupons, deposit of receipts, and harsher penalties for any such delays.

Other provisions would limit participation of certain minors, require monthly income reports from participating households, and require job searches in addition to work registration currently required.

The proposed amendment to food stamp



regulations appeared in the Federal Register Feb. 27. Comments are invited and should be sent to the Food Stamp Division, Food and Nutrition Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250 no later than March 29. All comments will be open to public inspection.

This revision will become effective upon publication of the final rule. The new

provisions governing the definition of income and deductions, the net income eligibility limit, and the computation of the purchase requirement will be put into effect for all certified households, new applicants, and any subsequent applicants by no later than June 1, 1976. All other provisions, including the new income accounting period and monthly reporting, will be put into effect 90 days later.

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## **IMPLEMENTING THE NEW CHILD NUTRITION LEGISLATION**

INTENSIVE WORK is under way to implement provisions of Public Law 94-105, the new child nutrition legislation. In accordance with the law, the Food and Nutrition Service has made some revisions in regulations governing the child nutrition programs, and has proposed a number of other changes.

FNS has taken the following actions regarding these programs —

### **Child Care Food Program**

On Jan. 2, FNS published in the Federal Register interim regulations for the new Child Care Food Program. The regulations were effective Jan. 1. Revised regulations, which will take into account comments received during the 45-day comment period, will be published for implementation by July 1. The Child Care Food Program provides Federal reimbursements for breakfasts, lunches, suppers and snacks served in eligible day care centers. P.L. 94-105 authorizes the program until Sept. 30, 1978.

The regulations provide that to be eligible, day care centers must have tax exempt status, be moving toward that status, or participate in another Federal program requiring nonprofit status. The day care programs must be non-residential and licensed or meet Federal interagency day care requirements.

At the State level, the Child Care Food Program will be administered by the

State education agency, or an alternate agency designated by the State, or the FNS Regional Office. These administering agencies will review and approve applications, execute operating agreements, establish accounting procedures, and monitor participation.

Sponsoring organizations for child care centers and family day care homes will be responsible for developing plans for program management, providing supervisory assistance, maintaining food service records, and reimbursing the child care homes.

Meals served under the program must meet prescribed nutritional standards.

### **Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants and Children**

Interim regulations for the Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) became effective Jan. 8. The regulations implement provisions of the new legislation and Federal Management Circular 74-7.

The regulation changes include the following:

- Allowable administrative expenses increase from 10 to 20 percent of program funds.

- Prior to receiving funds, State agencies must indicate how they intend to spend administrative funds, and in-



clude plans for providing nutrition education services.

- Program benefits are extended to children up to their fifth birthday and to all women recipients for a period of six months postpartum.

- WIC programs may not operate in the same geographical area as USDA's supplemental food program or the pilot food certificate program.

- State agencies must insure that programs begin in those areas which are most in need of supplemental foods.

- The WIC food package is modified somewhat, although the basic package remains the same.

- The Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands is now eligible to participate in the WIC program.

**Summer Food Program for Children**  
Final regulations for the Summer Food Program for Children became effective March 1. They appeared in the Federal Register March 5. The Summer Food Service Program provides free meals to needy children when schools are closed and lunch programs are not available.

The new regulations make residential summer camps and non-residential institutions eligible for the program if they serve areas of economic need, and if they do all of the following:

- Accept financial and administrative responsibility for the program.

- Provide an adequate and trained staff to monitor and operate it.

- Certify that all places where children are to be fed have been visited and evaluated as adequate.

- Document need of the area served.

The Summer Food Service Program for Children is administered by the State education agency, or an alternate agency designated by the State, or the FNS Regional Office. The new regulations require these administering agencies to:

- Make sure sponsors do not offer more than the necessary number of food programs in an area.

- Assure that school food service facilities are used whenever possible.

- Evaluate the capability of the sponsor's proposed food facility to serve more than one meal a day.

The regulations state that "start-up funds" are available, at the discretion of the States, to help sponsors with initial planning and training efforts. States' use of start-up funds for planning and training is optional, but they are required to advance funds to sponsors for actual program expenses. Funds are provided for State administrative expenses.

USDA reimburses camps and institutions for meals they serve, based on the number of children in their programs and their food service costs. Maximum rates of reimbursement are established at 87.25 cents for lunches and suppers; 48.25 cents for breakfasts; and 22.75 cents for snacks. Each March, rates are adjusted to reflect any change in the Consumer Price Index for the past year.

### **School Lunch Program**

A regulation change announced Dec. 4 makes more children eligible for reduced price meals under the National School Lunch Program. This change also applies to the School Breakfast Program.

P.L. 94-105 establishes income eligibility for reduced price meals served through these programs at 95 percent above the income poverty guidelines set

by the Secretary of Agriculture. For example, children from a family of four with an income of \$9,770 are now eligible for reduced price meals. Previously eligibility had been set at a maximum of 75 percent above the national guidelines. Reduced price benefits also apply to the Child Care Food Program.

The regulation change also requires participating schools to serve reduced price meals to eligible children. Previously, this was optional. Reduced price lunches sell for a maximum of 20 cents and reduced price breakfasts for a maximum of 10 cents.

FNS is currently reviewing public comments received on several other changes in school lunch regulations. The proposed changes appeared in the Federal Register Jan. 30, and March 1 was the deadline for public comment. Major proposals include:

- The "offer vs. serve" policy will go into effect in senior high schools. Under this change, senior high school students will only be required to accept a minimum of three of the five items in the lunch. The five items making up a Type A lunch are: meat or meat alternates; two or more fruits and/or vegetables; milk; and bread.

- The serving of butter or fortified margarine will be eliminated as a separate requirement for school lunch.

- The National School Lunch Program will be expanded beyond schools to public, or licensed nonprofit, private residential institutions. Such institutions are homes for the mentally retarded, orphanages, temporary shelters for abused or runaway children, and other child care institutions.

- Since residential child care institutions will now be eligible, FNS has designed new lunch patterns to meet

the nutritional needs of infants and children under school age.

### **School Breakfast Program**

Proposed amendments to regulations governing the School Breakfast Program appeared in the Federal Register Feb. 17. The deadline for public comment on the proposals is March 19.

The proposed change will expand eligibility for the program to public or licensed nonprofit private residential child care institutions. Previously, only public or nonprofit private schools were eligible. In line with this expanded eligibility, FNS has designed meal patterns for breakfasts served to infants and children.

Under the proposed amendment, State agencies other than State educational agencies will be permitted to administer the program.

To assure that an excess of food is not prepared, Federal reimbursement will be limited to one breakfast per child each day.

Several other administrative changes are included in the proposed regulations.

Comments on these proposals should be sent to William G. Boling, Manager, Child Nutrition Programs, Food and Nutrition Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

### **MATERIALS PREPARED FOR BREAKFAST INFORMATION CAMPAIGN**

To increase public awareness of the need for breakfast and the availability of the School Breakfast Program, FNS and States have developed public information campaign plans. This month, these plans will be submitted to the Congress, which mandated the effort in P.L. 94-105.

In support of the effort, FNS has developed a breakfast information packet





which is being distributed to State education agencies. The packet contains sample publications for parents and school administrators, as well as a breakfast planning guide for cafeteria managers and suggested bicentennial breakfast menus. States can request bulk orders of these publications. Also included is a question and answer sheet and a sample press release.

In addition, FNS is preparing public service radio and television spots for national distribution next fall.

### INCREASED RATES OF PAYMENT FOR THREE PROGRAMS

IN LINE WITH changes in the Consumer Price Index, FNS has increased rates of payment for the National School Lunch, School Breakfast, and Child Care Food Programs. Effective Jan. 1, the adjustments reflected the 3.7 percent change in the Index for June-November 1975.

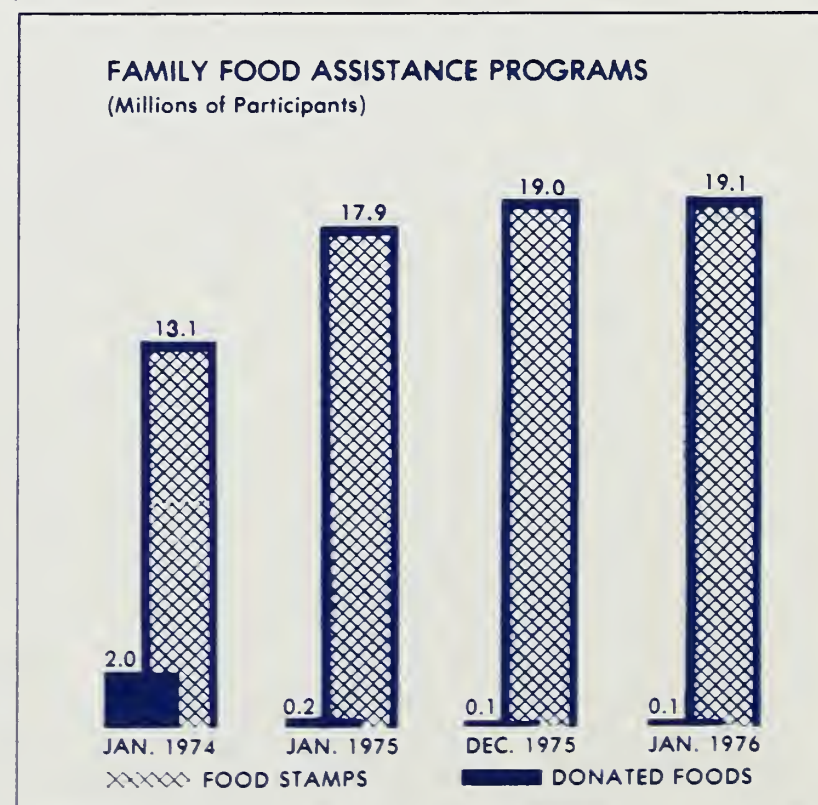
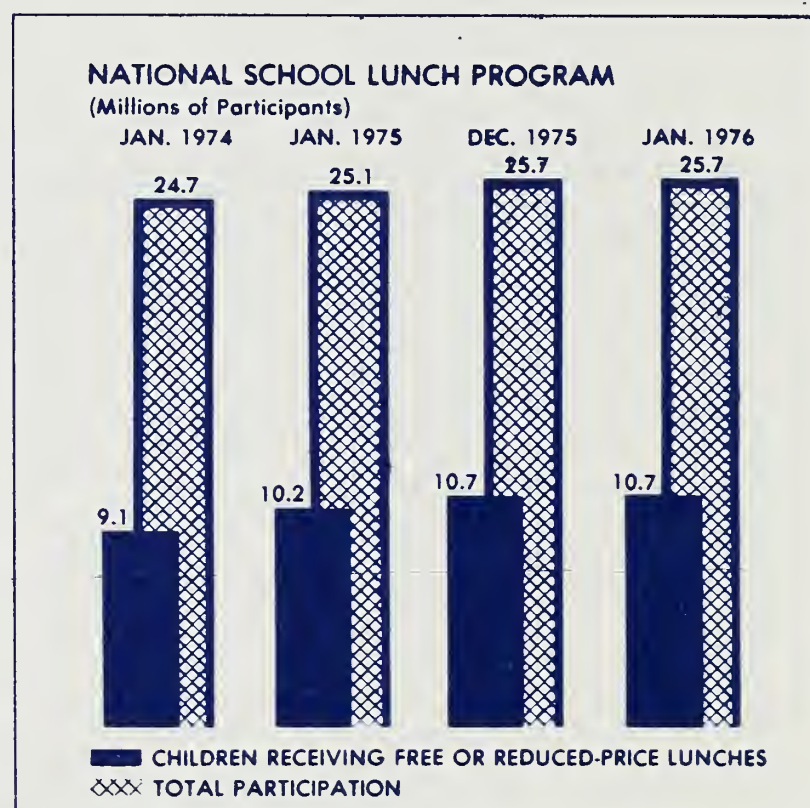
The average payment to States for each lunch served increased from 12.25 to 12.50 cents. States may vary a school's reimbursement up to 18.50 cents a lunch. Previously, the ceiling was 18.25 cents.

The additional average payment for lunches served to needy children went up 2.25 cents--to 56.75 cents for a free lunch and 46.75 cents for a reduced price lunch. The maximum reimbursement States can pay schools is 84.25 cents for a free lunch and 74.25 cents for a reduced price lunch.

The national average payment for school breakfasts is now 10 cents--an increase of .25 cents. The additional average payment is 25.25 cents for a free breakfast and 19 cents for a reduced price breakfast. Maximum rates of reimbursement remain at 45 cents for a free breakfast and 40 cents for a reduced price breakfast.

Sponsors of the Child Care Food Program

earn reimbursements for lunches and breakfast at the same level as schools. Reimbursements for snacks served to children in day care increased by .25 cents--to 5.25 cents for each snack. Additional reimbursement is 15.5 cents for a free snack and 10.25 for a reduced price snack.





## **NEW MEMBERS CHOSEN FOR NATIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL**

THREE NEW MEMBERS will attend the next meeting of the National Advisory Council on Child Nutrition on April 6 and 7. They are: Robert Den Hartog, associate superintendent of business affairs, Lincoln public schools, Lincoln, Neb.; Shirley Newcomb, professor of home economics, University of Idaho, Moscow, Idaho; and George M. Owen, M.D., professor, Nutrition Improvement Program, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque.

## **NEW RELEASES**

● "Energize Your Day with Breakfast--A Message for School Administrators" (FNS-152) and "Energize Your Day with Breakfast--A Message for Parents and Community Groups" (FNS-151) are two new brochures developed to report the availability of the School Breakfast Program. The brochures describe the School Breakfast Program and offer suggestions for encouraging schools to participate. They also specify assistance available from FNS and list participation requirements.

● "Bicentennial Breakfast Menus" (FNS-153) is a new brochure that shows school administrators how the breakfast program can complement classroom learning. It gives menu ideas which incorporate the bicentennial theme.

FNS is sending copies of these three publications to State education agencies for distribution.

● "Child Care Food Program" (FNS-154) tells how USDA helps provide nutritious meals for preschool and school-age children in child care facilities.

● "Summer Food Service Program for Children" (FNS-155) is another new fact sheet. It explains how the program helps provide nutritious meals for needy children during summer months and during vacations in areas operating

under a continuous school calendar.

These fact sheets are available from the Child Nutrition Division, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, Washington, D.C. 20250.

● "Urban Public School Feeding Survey--March 1975." Based on data collected each March, this annual report provides information on public school food service operations in cities with populations of 100,000 and over. It has information on the School Lunch, School Breakfast, and Special Milk Programs, as well as information on schools with no food service. More than 13,700 public schools participated in the survey. Copies available from the Child Nutrition Division.

● "Food Storage Guide for Schools and Institutions" (PA-403). This revised guide illustrates methods of handling and storing USDA-donated and locally purchased foods. It includes the latest research data on types of storage facilities and necessary equipment. Copies have been distributed to cooperating State agencies, and single copies are available for 85 cents from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402.

● "You and Food Stamps, Usted y Estampillas Para Alimentos" (FNS-5, bilingual) has been revised to reflect new food stamp denominations. The leaflet, in English and Spanish, offers basic information on the program, including eligibility requirements and application procedures, and on the basic food groups.

● "Food Stamp Program, 1961-75" (FNS-18) provides a brief history of the program.

For copies, write to the Food Stamp Division, Food and Nutrition Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20240.

